

In the Claims:

1. (Amended) Fluid filtration apparatus comprising:

a housing structure having an internal flow path through which a fluid to be filtered may be flowed, said housing structure having a side wall having an interior side surface;

a full flow filtration structure operably interposed in said internal flow path, said full flow filtration structure filtering a major portion of the fluid; [and]

a bypass filtration structure interposed in said internal flow path, said bypass filtration structure filtering a minor portion of the fluid[.]; and

a liner element disposed between said interior side surface of said side wall of said housing structure and said full flow filtration structure and operably interposed in said internal flow path.

2. (new) The fluid filtration apparatus of claim 1 wherein said full flow and bypass filtration structures are disposed in series within said internal flow path.

3. (new) The fluid filtration apparatus of claim 2 wherein said full flow filtration structure is disposed upstream of said bypass filtration structure within said internal flow path.

4. (new) The fluid filtration apparatus of claim 1 wherein said bypass filtration structure includes:

a bypass portion through which a first portion of fluid traversing said internal flow passage may pass without appreciable filtration by said bypass portion of the first portion of fluid, and

a filtering portion communicating with said bypass portion and through which a second portion of the fluid traversing said internal flow passage may pass, be filtered, and flow into said bypass portion for discharge therefrom,

said bypass portion being operative to create a lowered pressure area serving to draw the second fluid portion through said filtering portion.

5. (new) The fluid filtration apparatus of claim 4 wherein said bypass portion is operative to impart to fluid discharged therefrom a swirling flow pattern.

6. (new) The fluid filtration apparatus of claim 1 wherein said bypass filtration structure is disposed within said full flow filtration structure.

7. (new) The fluid filtration apparatus of claim 6 wherein said full flow and bypass filtration structures have generally tubular configurations, with said bypass filtration structure being coaxially nested within said full flow filtration structure.

8. (new) The fluid filtration apparatus of claim 1 further comprising an adapter structure forming a portion of said housing structure and being operative to impart to fluid entering said housing structure a swirling flow pattern centered about said full flow filtration structure.

9. (new) The fluid filtration apparatus of claim 1 wherein said bypass filtration structure is capable of filtering substantially finer particles than said full flow filtration structure.

10. (new) The fluid filtration apparatus of claim 1 wherein said fluid filtration apparatus is an oil filter assembly.

11. (new) The fluid filtration apparatus of claim 1 wherein said fluid to be filtered is a liquid.

12. (new) The fluid filtration apparatus of claim 1 wherein said fluid to be filtered is a gas.

13. (new) Fluid filtration apparatus comprising:

a generally tubular housing structure having a fluid inlet area and a fluid outlet area, said housing structure having a side wall having an interior side surface;

a generally tubular full flow fluid filter element coaxially and removably supported within said housing structure and defining with an interior surface portion thereof an annular outer flow area communicated with said fluid inlet area;

a generally cylindrical bypass fluid filtration structure coaxially supported within said full flow fluid filter element and defining therewith an inner annular flow area, said bypass fluid filtration structure having an outlet portion communicated with said fluid outlet area of said housing structure; and

a liner element disposed between said interior side surface of said side wall of said housing structure and said full flow fluid filter element and operably interposed in said internal flow path,

said fluid filtration apparatus being operative in response to a forced flow of a pressurized fluid to be filtered inwardly through said fluid inlet area of said housing structure to flow the fluid sequentially through said annular outer flow area, through said full flow filter element, through said inner annular flow area, through said bypass fluid filtration structure, outwardly through said outlet portion of said bypass fluid filtration structure, and outwardly through said fluid outlet area of said housing structure,

wherein said bypass fluid filtration structure includes:

a generally tubular bypass portion in which said outlet portion is formed, and

a generally tubular filtering portion communicating with said outlet portion,

said outlet portion, in response to forced fluid flow therethrough, being operative to create a lowered pressure area serving to draw fluid through said filtering portion and into said bypass portion for discharge therefrom through said fluid outlet area of said housing structure,

wherein said outlet portion is operative to import to fluid being discharged therefrom a swirling flow pattern,

wherein said generally tubular bypass portion has a side wall surface portion and an outlet end surface, and

said outlet portion includes a circumferentially spaced series of discharge passages extending inwardly through said side wall surface portion, opening outwardly through said outlet end surface, and being axially and circumferentially angled relative to the axis of said bypass portion.

14. (new) The fluid filtration apparatus of claim 13 wherein:

said fluid filtration apparatus is an oil filter assembly.

15. (new) The fluid filtration apparatus of claim 13 wherein:

said fluid inlet area of said housing structure is configured in a manner such that pressurized fluid forced inwardly therethrough traverses said outer annular flow area in a whirling flow pattern centered about said full flow fluid filter element.

16. (new) The fluid filtration apparatus of claim 13 wherein said generally tubular filtering portion includes:

a perforated flow tube member having a first longitudinal portion removably and coaxially received in said bypass portion, and a second longitudinal portion, and

a tubular bypass fluid filter element removably and coaxially telescoped onto said second longitudinal portion of said perforated flow tube.

17. (new) The fluid filtration apparatus of claim 13 wherein:

said tubular bypass fluid filter element is a disposable filter element.

18. (new) The fluid filtration apparatus of claim 13 wherein:

said tubular bypass fluid filter element is a cleanable and reuseable filter element.

19. (new) The fluid filtration apparatus of claim 13 wherein:

said full flow fluid filter element is a cleanable and reusable filter element.

20. (new) The fluid filtration apparatus of claim 13 wherein:

said full flow fluid filtration element is a disposable filter element.

21. (new) The fluid filtration apparatus of claim 13 wherein:

said pressurized fluid is a liquid.

22. (new) The fluid filtration apparatus of claim 13 wherein:

said pressurized fluid is a gas.